

I want to take this opportunity to bring the American people up to date concerning the Cuban crisis -- both on how far we have come and how far we have to go.

The understandings between Soviet Chairman Khrushchev and myself set forth in our letters of October 27 and 28 made possible a substantial improvement in the prospects for peace and security in the Caribbean. It would be useful at this time to review the precise nature of those ~~understandings~~ understandings which have thus far been partially, but only partially, fulfilled:

1. Chairman Khrushchev agreed to remove from Cuba all weapons systems capable of offensive use -- to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba; and to permit appropriate United Nations observation and supervision to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments.

2. We on our part agreed -- once these adequate arrangements for verification had been established -- to remove our Naval quarantine and to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba. The evidence to date indicates that all known offensive missile sites in Cuba have been dismantled -- the missiles and their associated equipment have been loaded on Soviet ships which have departed Cuba -- and inspection at sea from United States Naval vessels has confirmed that the number of missiles reported by the Soviet Union as having been brought into Cuba (which closely corresponds

to our own information) has now been removed. The Soviet Government has also stated that all nuclear weapons have been removed from Cuba and that offensive weapons will not be reintroduced.

(Alternative A -- In addition, Chairman Khrushchev has informed me today that all of the IL-28 bombers now in Cuba will be removed within the next _____ weeks. Inasmuch as this step goes a long way toward reducing the danger which faced this Hemisphere 4 weeks ago, I have given instructions to lift our Naval quarantine. However,)

(Alternative B -- There are important steps -- but they are far short of complete fulfillment of the Soviet Union's commitments and far short of the conditions which the letters of October 27 and 28 agreed would have to exist before the United States could lift the quarantine and give assurances against an invasion. In the first place, the Soviets have not yet removed from Cuba the IL-28 bombers which are capable of carrying nuclear destruction to many parts of the Hemisphere. In addition,)

the United Nations has not yet been put in a position where it could verify that all offensive weapons have been removed; and no safeguards have been established against the future introduction into Cuba of weapons capable of offensive use. It is the Cuban Government which has rejected proposals made by the Secretary General of the United Nations to establish arrangements for verification -- and it is that Government, therefore, which must bear responsibility for thus far frustrating the

achievement of an important step forward in Hemispheric peace.

This Government does not intend to weaken in any way its resolve that the threat of offensive weapons in Cuba has been and will continue to be eliminated and that the original commitments of Chairman Khrushchev be fulfilled. We have refrained from taking further military action against the communist buildup in Cuba -- but we are ready for whatever action may be required. We have temporarily suspended rigid enforcement of the quarantine to facilitate the removal of these weapons and the efforts of the Secretary General -- but that quarantine can be enforced and expanded as required. In the absence of international or other safeguards as originally agreed upon between Chairman Khrushchev and myself, we are continuing aerial surveillance in conformity with the resolution of the OAS -- and we are prepared to enforce that surveillance and respond to any attacks upon our planes as required. The size and nature of the Soviet military presence in Cuba -- which continues to be large and apparently highly organized -- even after the removal of these weapons, requires continued surveillance and vigilance on our part.

If, on the other hand, Chairman Khrushchev is able to make good his commitments of October 23 -- if all offensive weapons systems are removed from Cuba and kept out of this Hemisphere in the future -- if adequate verification and safeguards can assure peace in the Caribbean -- then there will be no need for continuation of our quarantine, there would

be no reason not to reaffirm our earlier pledge to "neither initiate nor permit aggression in this Hemisphere", and the achievement of a peaceful solution to this crisis could open the door to further major breakthroughs and a new era in world relations.